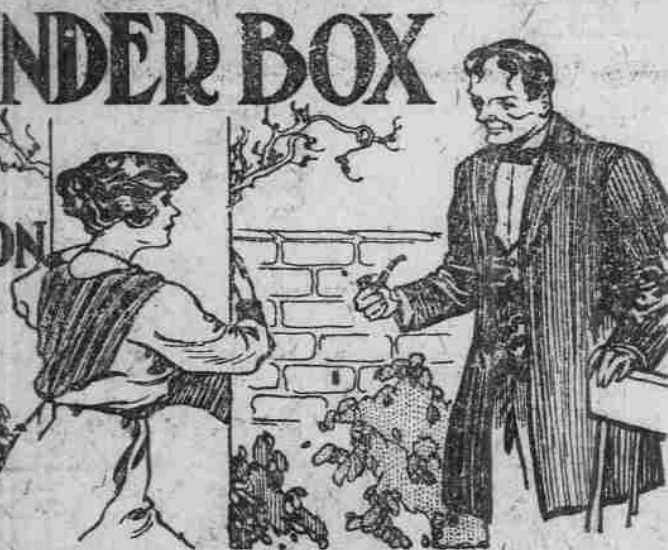


The TINDER BOX

By
MARIA THOMPSON DAVIES
AUTHOR OF
"THE MELTING OF MOLLY"

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(Continued.)

I know he is going to hate terribly to have me ask him to marry me, and I hate to hurt him, but it is my duty to get Jane's \$50,000 so the five may be as happy as I am tonight, only there aren't five other Crags. I know it will be a lifelong mortification to him to have me do it, but he lost his chance tonight, grandmothering me. Still, I did turn my lips away. I was not quite ready then. I am now.

If he wants to go on wearing clothes like that I'm going to let him, even on the senate floor, but I can't ever stand for Cousin Jasmine to cut his hair any more. I want to do it myself, and I'm going to tell her so and why. She and I have cried over that miniature of the lost young Confederate cousin of hers, and she'll understand me, I am sure.

But as I think it over—it always is best to be kind, and I believe I'll let him get through this rally—it's just four days—a free and happy man.

I don't know whether to go in and wake up June or not. I would like to go to sleep with that kiss revelation between us, but maybe it is my duty to the five to extract some data from her while it is fresh on the foam. I am afraid it is going to go hard with her, but somehow I have a newborn faith in Polk that makes me feel that he will make it as easy as he can for her.

Isn't it a glorious thing to realize that neither she nor I will have to sit and be tortured by waiting to see what those men are going to do?

CHAPTER XV.

Dynamite.
WHEN a man injures a woman's feelings by any particular course of conduct to which she objects, the maternal fire rises to the surface, and she treats and forgives him as she would a naughty child, but a man makes any kind of woman affront into a lover's quarrel. That is what masculine Glendale has been doing to his women folks for four days, and I believe everybody has been secretly enjoying it.

As to the rally, they have stood aside with their hands in their pockets and their noses in the air, and if it hadn't been for Aunt Augusta and Neil and Jane being natural born carpenters and draymen we might have had to give it up and let them go as with it to their own glory.

When Neil and Jane went to see Mr. Dodd about building the long tables to serve the barbecue dinner on he said he was too busy to do it and hadn't even any lumber to call.

Then things happened in my back yard that it sounds like a romance to write about. Jane lent me over to borrow the Crags' team and wagon, and Henrietta and Cousin Martha and any of the rest of his woman impediments that I could get. He was out of town, trying a case, over at Bolivar, and wouldn't get back until Monday night.

Jane and Neil and Aunt Augusta took the two axes and one large hammer and tore down my back fence while I and the others loaded the planks on the wagon. Jane appointed Henrietta to sit and hold the slow old horses in case they should have got demoralized by the militant atmosphere pervading Glendale and try to bolt. I never saw any human being enjoy herself as Henrietta did, and it was worth it all just to look into her radiant countenance.

Jane took all the third top blows to do herself and left the unloosening of the lower rails to Aunt Augusta while Neil ripped off the planks that struck I could almost hear Neil's long, polished finger nails go with a rip every time she jerked a particularly tough old plank into subjection, and Aunt Augusta dispensed encouraging axioms about pioneer work as she banged along behind Jane. Jane herself looked as cool as a cucumber, didn't get the least bit ruffled and had the expression on her face that the truly normal woman who while she is hemming a baby's flannel petticoat.

And though during the day many delightful crises were precipitated the most interesting were the expressions that devastated Polk Hayes' and Lee Greenfield's faces as they came around the side of the house to see what all that hammering was about.

"Caroline!" exclaimed Lee, in perfect agony, as he beheld the day of his ardent, though long restrained, affections poised across the wheel of the wagon tugging at the middle of a heavy plank which Mrs. Dodd and I were pushing up to her, while Mamie, the mother of seven, stood firmly on top of the wagon guiding it into place.

"Help!" gasped Polk, as he started to take the ax from Jane by force. "Then we all stopped while Jane quietly gurgled the molasses of the situation to them, and sent them on down the street sadder and wiser men. I thought Polk was going to cry on her shoulder before he was finally persuaded to go and leave us to our fate, and the expression on Lee's face as he looked up at torn, dirty, perspiring Caroline, with a smudge on her nose and blood on her hand from an absolutely insignificant scratch, was such as ought to have been on Ned's face as he ought to have been standing by Mamie with the asafetida bottle. That's mixed up, but the five ought to catch the point.

It took up all of Saturday afternoon

and part of Monday morning, but we built those tables, thereby disciplining masculine Glendale with a severity that I didn't think could have been in us.

We all rested on Sunday—that is, ostensibly. Jane put down all sorts of things on paper that everybody had to do on Monday and on Tuesday. Henrietta sat by her in a state of trance, and it did me good to see Sallie out in the hammock at Widgeables taking care of both the kit and the pup, laboriously assisted by panting Aunt Dilse, because Jane explained to her so beautifully that she needed a lot of Henrietta's time, that Sallie acquiesced with good natured bewilderment. Of course Cousin Jasmine helped her some, but she was busy aiding Cousin Martha to beat up some mysterious eggs in the kitchen, with the shutters shut because it was Sunday. It was something that takes two days to "beat" and was to be the piece de resistance, after the barbecue.

Mrs. Hargrove couldn't help Sallie at all with the kiddies either, because she was looking through all her boxes and bundles for a letter from her son which she thought said something about favoring woman's rights, and if it is like she thinks it is she is going to go to the barbecue and get things nice and hot instead of having them brought to her cold.

I had hoped to get a few minutes Sunday afternoon to myself so I could go up into the garret and look through one of the trunks I brought from Paris with me to see how many sets of things I have got left. I am going to need a trousseau pretty soon, and I might need it more suddenly than I expect. I don't see any reason for people's not marrying immediately when they make up their minds, and my half of ours is made up strong enough to decidedly influence rapidly in his. But then I really don't believe that the Crags would care very much about the high lights of a trousseau, and it was just as well that Neil came in to get me to help her mean Polk Hayes' Evelyns.

Neil answered with the positiveness that only a very young person can get up the courage to use, "I have forgot that I was ever influenced by his narrow minded, primitive personality at all. If I ever love and marry it will be a man who can appreciate and further my real woman's destiny."

"Well, then, that's all right," I answered, with such relief in my heart that it must have showed in my voice and face. I had worried about Neil since I could see plainly, though she hasn't told me yet, and I am sure she doesn't realize it, that Jane had decided Polk's destiny. Neil is not twenty-one yet, and she will find lots of men in the world that will be fully capable of making her believe they feel that way about her destiny until they succeed in tying her up to using for the least utilitarian purposes they are sure such a pretty woman is created for.

It will take me in general another hundred years yet and lots of suffering to realize that a woman's destiny is anything but himself and get to house-keeping with her on that basis.

The Crag didn't jog into Glendale on his rawboned old horse until 1:30 Monday night. I had been watching down Providence road for him from my pillow ever since I put out my light at 11 because Jane had decided that it was our duty to go to bed early so as to be as fresh as possible for the rally on the morning. She had waited to the gate with Polk at 10 and hadn't come back until 11, so, of course, she was ready to turn in. It was just foolish, primitive old convention that kept me from slipping on my slippers and dressing gown—I've got the prettiest ones that ever came across the Atlantic, Louise de Meretion, Rue de Rivoli, Paris—and going down to the gate to use him for just a minute. That second he stood undecided in the middle of the road looking at my darkened house was agony that I'm not going to put up with very much longer.

Jane and I with Henrietta were out by the old gray moss rock at the first break of day installing Jasper and Petunia and a few of their conferees. Jasper had always been king of all Glendale barbecue pits, and he had had them dug the day before and filled with dry hickory fires all night, and his men was so naughty that I trembled for the slaves under his command. His basket of "yarks" was under the side of the rock in hoodoo-like shadows, and the wagons of poor, innocent, sacrificed lambs and turkeys and sucking pigs were backed up by the largest infernal pit. Petunia was already elbow deep in a cedar tub of cornmeal for the pones, and another minion was shucking late roasting ears and washing the sweet potatoes to be packed down with the meat by 8 o'clock. A wagon was to collect the baked hams and sandwiches and biscuits and confections of all variety and pedigree from the rest of the league at 10 o'clock.

We didn't know it then, but another wagon was already being loaded very privately in town with ice and bottles, glasses and lemons and mint and kegs and schooners. I am awfully glad that the Equality league had forgotten all

about the wetting up of the rally, because I don't believe we would have been equal to the situation with Aunt Augusta and Jane both prohibition enthusiasts.

"Evelyn," gasped Jane as we stood on the edge of the bluff that commands a view of almost all the Harpeth valley stretched out like the very garden of Eden itself, crossed by silver creeks, lined with broad roads and mantled in the richness of the harvest haze, "can all those wagons full of people be coming to accept our invitation?"

"Yes; they're our guests," I answered, with the elation of generations of rally givers rising in my breast as I saw the stream of wagons and carriages and buggies, with now and then a motorcar, all approaching Glendale from all points of the compass.

"Have we enough to feed them, Jasper?" she turned and asked in still further alarm.

"Nothing never give out in Glendale yet since we took the cover off the pits for Old Hickory in my granddad's time," he answered, with a trace of offense in his voice as he stood over a half tub of butter, mixing in his yarks with mutterings that sounded like incantations. I drew Jane away, for I



"Yes; they're our guests," I answered, felt that it was no time to disturb him, when the basting of his baked meats was just about to begin.

I was glad that about all the countryside had gathered, unhitched their wagons, picketed their horses and got down to the enjoyment of the day before the motorcars bringing the distinguished guests had even started from Bolivar. It was great to watch the farmers slap neighbors on the back, exchange news and tobacco plugs, while the rosy women folks grouped and ungrouped in radiant good cheer with children squirming and tangling over and under and around the rejoicings.

"This, Evelyn," remarked Jane, with controlled emotion in her voice and a mist in her eyes behind her glasses, "is not only the bone and sinew, but also the rich red blood in the arteries of our nation. I feel humbled and honored at being permitted to go among them."

And it was into an atmosphere of almost hilarious enjoyment that the distinguished commission arrived a few minutes before noon, just as Jasper's barbecue pits were beginning to send forth absolutely maddening aromas. Neil whirled up the hill first and turned her auto across the road by the bluff with that rakish skill of hers that always sends my heart into my throat. And whom did she have sitting at her blue embroidered linen elbow but Richard Hall himself? Good old big, strong, dandy Dickie, how great it was to see him again, and if I had had my own heart in my breast it would have leaped with delight at the sight of him! But even the Crags' that I had exchanged mine for, though it was an entire stranger to Dickie, beat fast enough in sympathy with the dance in my eyes to send the color up to my face in good fashion as I hurried across a lump of goldenrod to meet him.

"Evelyn, the lovely!" he exclaimed in his big booming voice as he took me by both shoulders and shook me instead of shaking merely my hand. "Richard the royal!" I answered in our old quarter Latin form of greeting. I didn't look right into his eyes as I always had, however, and something sent a keen pain through the exchanged heart in my breast at the thought that I might be obliged to hurt the dandy old dear.

But suddenly the sight of Neil's loveliness cheered me. She had had Dick in that car with her ever since 9 o'clock, almost three hours, showing him the sights of that teeming heavy lush harvest countryside around Bolivar and Glendale, all over which are roofed old country houses which brood over families that cluster around the unit that one man and a woman make in their commonwealth. Neil's eyes were sweet as she looked at him. I'll wait and see if I need to worry over him. With the fervor I felt I had a right to, I then avoided the issue of Richard's eyes, put it up to God and Neil, and introduced him to Jane.

And while the three of them stood waiting for Neil to back up the auto and put her spark plug in her pocket—only Richard calmly took it and put it in his—the rest of the cars came up the hill and turned into the edge of the goldenrod.

(To be Continued.)

JUST ARRIVED,
FRENCH AND DUTCH BULBS
JOHN RECK & SON.

YOU CAN'T BEAT
FRISBIE'S
FRESH APPLE PIES
MADE WHERE
EVERYTHING IS CLEAN

HARRIET MAY BOWERS
VS.
JAMES BOWERS.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,
FAIRFIELD COUNTY, ss.,
SUPERIOR COURT.

October 8th, 1915.
Upon the complaint said Harriet May Bowers praying for reasons therein set forth, for a divorce and custody of minor child returnable to the Superior Court, in and for Fairfield County, on the first Tuesday of November, 1915. It appearing to and being found by the subscribing authority that James Bowers the said defendant is absent from this state and gone to parts unknown.

Therefore Ordered, that notice of the pendency of said complaint be given by publishing this order in the Bridgeport Farmer, a newspaper printed in Bridgeport, three times successively, commencing on or before the 21st day of October, 1915.

WM. T. HAVILAND,
Clerk of the Superior Court for Fairfield County.

BEATRICE FULLER
VS.
HAROLD W. FULLER.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,
FAIRFIELD COUNTY, ss.,
SUPERIOR COURT.

October 8th, A. D. 1915.
Upon the complaint of the said Beatrice Fuller praying, for reasons therein set forth, for a divorce and custody of two minor children now pending before this court, having been returned thereto on the first Tuesday of June, 1915.

It appearing to and being found by this court that Harold W. Fuller the said defendant is absent from this state and gone to parts unknown—and that notice of the pendency of the complaint was given as required by order of notice heretofore issued, and the plaintiff asks for a further order of notice in the premises. Therefore Ordered, that notice of the pendency of said complaint be given by publishing this order in the Bridgeport Farmer, a newspaper printed in Bridgeport, two times successively, commencing on or before the 15th day of October, A. D. 1915.

By the Court,
JAMES W. TRACEY,
Asst. Clerk of the Superior Court for Fairfield County.

ANTONIO MASTROIANNI
ELENA MASTROIANNI

NEW HAVEN COUNTY,
SUPERIOR COURT.

October 8th, 1915.
COMPLAINT FOR DIVORCE.
Ordered, that additional notice of the pendency of the complaint in the above entitled case be given by publishing this order in the Bridgeport Farmer a newspaper published in said Fairfield County, once a week for two weeks successively beginning on or before the 15th day of October, 1915.

By the Court,
ERROLL M. AUGUR,
Assistant Clerk.

NOTICE
Bridgeport Hydraulic Co.

NO. 320 MAIN STREET
Water Rates for the quarter ending Oct. 1st, 1915 are NOW DUE and payable at the office of the Company, No. 320 Main Street. All bills must be paid on or before Oct. 15, 1915.
Business hours Saturdays from 8 A. M. to 12 M.
For the accommodation of the public the office will be kept open from 8 A. M. to 8 P. M., Mondays, Oct. 8th and 12th, 1915.
G 11 b * ALBERT E. LAVERY, Secretary.

NOTICE
Hearing de Construction of Sewers in Sundry Streets

At the meeting of the Common Council of the City of Bridgeport, held October 4, 1915, the following resolution was adopted, to wit:
Resolved, That the Clerk be and hereby is directed to notify the persons in interest to appear before this Common Council, at the Common Council Room, City Hall, City of Bridgeport, on the eighteenth day of October, 1915 at eight o'clock in the evening and be heard in relation to the construction of sanitary sewers in the following streets:
Whittier street from present terminus 100 feet southerly.
Pequonnock street, from Chestnut street, 85 feet northerly.
Uncova Hill street, from Brook-lawn avenue, 300 feet north.
Attest:
J. ALEX. ROBINSON,
City Clerk.

AT DEVON

Kensington Park
Tomorrow

BIG OFFERING
TERMS REASONABLE

BRING OUT THE WIFE
AND BABY

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SOFT SHELL CRABS
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Over 10,000 Testimonials Like These: Mr. E. M. Ehlers, Secty. Grand Lodge of Mason of New York City writes that, "Although a sufferer from rheumatism for many years two doses stopped all pain and one bottle cured me."

Mr. A. Goldman, Victoria, Texas, says: "I am very well pleased with your medicine; am recommending it very highly. It has done more for me than anything I have ever tried."

Marshall F. W. Geraty, of 70 Manhattan St., New York, says: "I have suffered with rheumatism for many years, have tried almost every known remedy but got no relief or cure until I took yours. In forty-eight hours, I was entirely cured and free from all pain. I send this unsolicited."

Hill's Rheumatic Remedy is on sale at most drug stores at \$1.00 per bottle. One bottle generally effects a complete cure. Call or send for free sample bottle and booklet at once. There is no greater service you can perform for humanity than to tell any rheumatic sufferer about this wonderful preparation. Address: Hill Medicine Co., 117 East 54th St., New York, N. Y.

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WE HAVE
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The best cigars made in imported and domestic brands. Complete line of smokers' supplies.

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AS WELL AND AS MUCH

No merchant ever failed if he advertised as WELL and as MUCH as he could.

State of Connecticut

Treasury Department.

Taxes

ON

Investments

Bridgeport lays taxes on all property owned by residents on September 1st, of each year. All residents of this City can pay a tax of four mills on the dollar on bonds, notes or other choses in action and exempt them from the much larger local tax, but this must be done BEFORE September 1st. Enquire of your banker or write to STATE TREASURER, at Hartford, about this.

A HEAVY PENALTY